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Investigating Intersections: Exploring the Growth and Expansion of Anymal Liberation

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Abstract

Anymal liberation now attracts scholars and activists from around the world. Anymal studies has gone international, and has expanded tremendously, with a variety of interdisciplinary conferences and journals reflecting this growth. Anymal activism is also growing in numbers and strength. With so much growth and expansion, it has become necessary to clarify borders and distinguish between new and expanding connections, affiliations, and intersections—especially intersections. This paper explores anymal studies/liberation affiliations and interconnections with an eye to providing a measure of clarity regarding these many new affiliations and “intersections,” and critically examines the use of “intersectionality” in anymal studies and among anymal activists.

INVESTIGATING INTERSECTIONS: EXPLORING THE GROWTH AND EXPANSION OF ANYMAL LIBERATION

Anymal liberation has finally come into its own, attracting thousands of scholars and activists in nations around the world. Anymal studies is a “rapidly growing interdisciplinary field” (Human-Animal Studies, 2016) that has expanded tremendously in the last few decades. According to the *Animals and Society Institute*, college programs in anymal studies have sprung up across fifteen countries. Among the twenty-four journals listed by the *Animals and Society Institute* (HAS Links, 2016), only two have been around for more than a dozen years, eight have been publishing for about ten years, six emerged in the last 4-6 years, and six came into existence only in the last two years. At the time I looked (spring 2016), *Animals and Society Institute* also listed three conferences in the area of anymal studies over the next four months—with six in just one spring month. This plethora of conferences no longer focuses on anymal ethics, but represents an array of new affiliations across disciplines. Conferences carry titles such as “Animals Under Capitalism: Art and Politics,” “Being Interdisciplinary in Animal Studies: A Post Graduate Symposium,” “Intervening with Children who Witnessed or Engaged in Animal Abuse,” “Intersectional Justice: Towards a Whole Earth Community,” and “Animal Biographies—Recovering Animal Selfhood through Interdisciplinary Narration?” (“Events” At *Animals and Society Institute*). Journal titles overlap with law, environmental studies, political science, biology, and so on (HAS Links, 2016). Tapping into this growth and expansion, major presses such as Brill, Routledge, and Columbia now offer lines of books in anymal studies.

Anymal activism is also expanding and flexing newfound muscles, perhaps best evidenced by new vegan alternatives. Some 33 percent of consumers in the United States “frequently go meat free” (Miller, 2015), and due to the splendors of supply and demand, companies have responded by producing a host of vegan alternatives. Vegan food alternatives have expanded beyond hamburgers and hotdogs to provide a wide range of previously unavailable possibilities that are nothing short of delicious, including “shrimp,” sour “cream,” and “chicken.” Vegans have recently been offered amazing alternatives like Field Roast’s Chao Slices and Gardein Golden Fishless Filets, which won the Best New Product award for *Better Homes and Gardens* in 2015 (Awards, 2016; Miller, 2015), and Follow Your Heart just released the first VeganEgg, which seems sure to win at least one award in 2016. This shift is also evidenced by consistently growing attendance at what is currently the largest annual US conference on anymal concerns and anymal advocacy, put on by the Farm Animal Rights Movement (FARM). In 2016 this conference drew 1,700 people from “42 U.S. states and 18 other countries including Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Denmark, Germany, Greece, India, Israel, Mexico, Russia, Thailand, and United Kingdom” (AR 2016 Report, 2016).

With so much growth and expansion, it is a good time to sort out some of these new and expanding connections, affiliations, and intersections—especially intersections. I have heard the term “intersections” used a great deal in anymal advocacy and anymal studies, often to denote several completely different phenomena. For example, I have heard the term used to describe overlap with other academic fields, common concerns across social justice causes, and shared roots of oppression. In this paper I explore these various anymal liberation affiliations and

interconnections in the hope of providing a measure of clarity about these new and growing “intersections.” I also critically examine the expanding, random, and it would seem largely uninformed application of “intersectionality” among anymal activists and those in anymal studies.

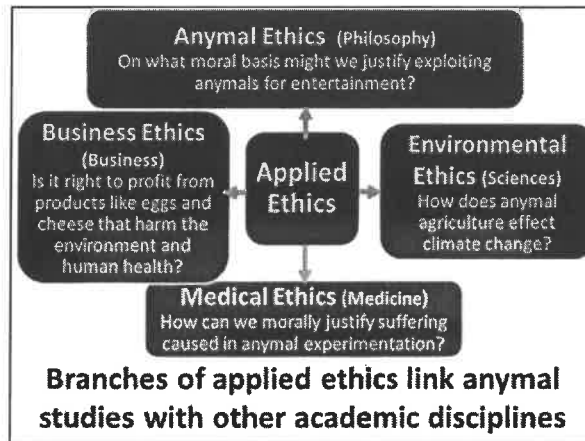
As a matter of sensitivity to those who are reading challenged, graphs accentuate and clarify the written word. Additionally, I use “anymal,” a contraction of “any” and “animal” (pronounced like “any” and “mal”), to refer to *all* animals who are of a species other than that of the speaker/author. This means that if a human being uses the term, all species except *Homo sapiens* are indicated. If a gorilla or chimpanzee, for example, signs “anymal,” all species (including human beings) will be included except either gorillas or chimpanzees, according to the “speaker.” I use this term because, as I argue previously (2006, p. 9-14), “anymal” avoids:

- using “animal” as if human beings were not animals;
- dualistic and alienating references such as “non” and “other”; and
- cumbersome terms such as nonhuman animals and other-than-human animals.

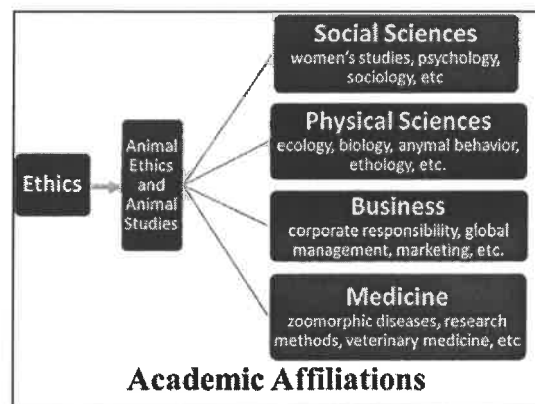
Academic Affiliations

Anymal studies now draws scholars not just from ethics, but from a variety of disciplines (HAS Links, 2016). These cross-discipline intersections, or academic affiliations, are critical to cross-fertilization—scholars apply their specific areas of interest and expertise to anymal studies, delving into such diverse and specialized topics as post-traumatic stress disorder in elephants (a specialty of Gay Bradshaw) and anymal emotions (a specialty for Marc Bekoff). Academic affiliations also inspire special issues in academic studies journals: the *Journal of Critical Animal Studies* ran an issue on *Women of Color in Critical Animal Studies* (8:3 2010) and *Green Theory and Praxis* is preparing this issue on Queer Theory and Ecofeminism (10:3, 2016). Such special issues underscore the expanded reach of contemporary anymal studies.

Contemporary anymal studies took root in ethics, a specialty field in the discipline of philosophy, in the works of such well-known scholars as Peter Singer (*Animal Liberation*, 1975) and Tom Regan (*The Case for Animal Rights*, 1985). Anymal ethics is now a well-established subject, and remains one of the most vital academic affiliations within anymal studies. Applied ethics is also one of the strongest connections across academic disciplines, intersecting with the work of scholars and students in fields such as medicine (medical ethics), business (business ethics), and environmental studies (environmental ethics).



Ethics remains the seed and the taproot of anymal studies, but ethics is now one of many academic affiliations in relation to anymal studies.



Anymal studies scholars and anymal activists have a much richer and wider understanding of the expanse and depth of the problem of anymal exploitation thanks to these many growing academic affiliations. Whether recording prairie dog communication, critically examining media depictions of companion anymals, or noting connections between cissexism and speciesism, such cross-fertilization challenges scholars in a variety of disciplines and strengthens anymal studies. Academic affiliations are important both for camaraderie and shared commitment, as well as because of the critical tensions that anymal issues provoke in affiliated fields of study, which are appropriate and important in any academic setting. In light of these proliferating academic affiliations, it is increasingly important that scholars in the field of anymal studies understand other social justice causes, including the politics of identity.

Activist Channels

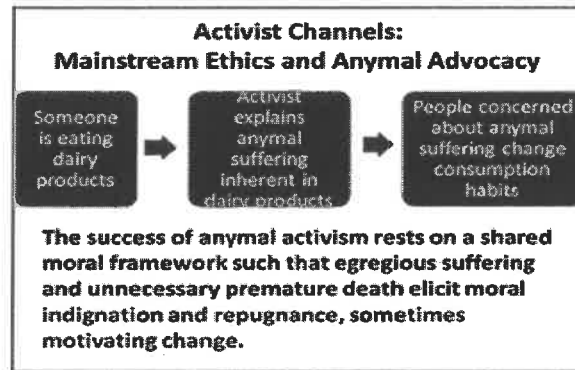
The field of ethics (especially moral theory) undergirds anymal liberation and provides the seed and taproot for anymal studies. Ultimately, effective anymal activism rests on an often unnoticed shared moral framework—a generally accepted moral imperative that we ought not to cause suffering and premature death if we can avoid such actions without causing similar outcomes, and also the general sense that it is important to maintain moral consistency. For centuries moral philosophers have been aware that “there can be no moral justification for refusing to take . . .

suffering into consideration” (Singer, 1989, p. 8). Not surprisingly, even without formal education in ethics, human beings tend to be sensitive to the moral weight of harming other living beings, and we tend to recoil when confronted with suffering—especially severe suffering caused by wanton disregard, such as that exposed by undercover agents on factory farms and in animal labs and zoos.

This moral inclination—our general distaste for suffering—is evidenced by polls. An article titled “Global Polls Reveal Consumers Worldwide Want an End to Animal Testing for Cosmetics,” notes that animal testing “can cause pain and suffering to animals and it is not worth causing this kind of suffering just to test the safety of cosmetics, especially when there are safe ingredients already available” (Global, 2016). Another poll titled “Public Lukewarm on Animal Rights” actually indicates that the U.S. public engaged with this poll is red-hot against industry practices that cause misery to animals—“96% of Americans” agree that animals “deserve at least some protection from harm and exploitation” (Moore, 2003). A 2015 Gallop Poll indicates that more than 33 percent—more than one third of respondents—feel that animal rights should be *on a par* with human rights. Meanwhile, very few people in the United States—3%—“believe animals require little protection from harm and exploitation” (Rifkin, 2015).



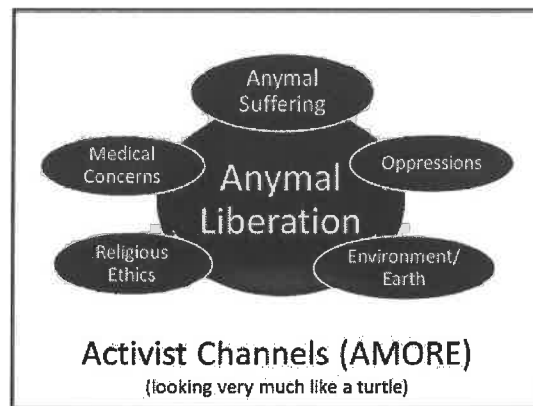
We also share a commitment to consistency in ethics, especially with regard to words and deeds—people tend to be decidedly unimpressed with hypocrisy. We do not generally admire those who speak much of the virtue of simplicity while driving an expensive car, who spend much breath espousing abstinence while mating with random available sexual partners, or who treasure freedom while enslaving others. Those who object to causing egregious suffering when such sufferings might be avoided, when confronted with the reality of factory farming, for example, often recognize that they need to go vegan if they are to be true to their personal moral convictions. This shared moral framework—our generally accepted moral sense that we ought to avoid causing suffering and premature death, and that we ought to maintain moral consistency—encourages each of us to make choices, as a matter of personal integrity, that do not cause suffering and premature death.



How could anymal activists inspire change in the absence of this shared moral foundation on which we build arguments and on which pleas for compassion rest? Yet activists tend to be unaware of the essential moral framework on which their work rests, a framework that is essential to bringing the changes that advocates hope to inspire. And while anymal activists may have good reason to feel that humans are, overall, completely indifferent to ethics, this is certainly not the case. Our collective dependence on shared morality and a commitment to moral consistency becomes obvious when we meet someone who does not (or pretends not to) share this fundamental moral framework. In such instances, someone might express complete indifference to the sufferings of sows in farrowing crates, or to the premature deaths of veal calves. Or they might express complete indifference to maintaining any sort of consistency between their words, understandings, and deeds. Activists who continue such a dialogue are generally wasting their time because those who profess not to care about suffering, and who do not admit to valuing life, will not be inspired to change when confronted with information about health concerns, world hunger, environmental degradation, and so on. *In the absence of this often undetected underlying moral commitment, there is simply no basis for concern, and no incentive for change.*

Anymal advocacy is *utterly dependent* on this moral common denominator. When people of conscience are confronted with images of an elephant being beaten by a trainer, a bobcat caught in a leg hold trap, or a downed cow in the dairy industry being pulled to slaughter on a chain, they tend to feel sadness and moral indignation, which can motivate both lifestyle changes and activism. Understanding the importance of this shared moral framework can help anymal activists to identify likely channels for advocacy. “Activist channels” might be used to designate other social justice causes that share overlapping concern with anymal advocacy. To remember primary concerns associated with anymal exploitation, including three key areas of overlap with other social justice causes, I use the acronym AMORE (“love” in Italian):

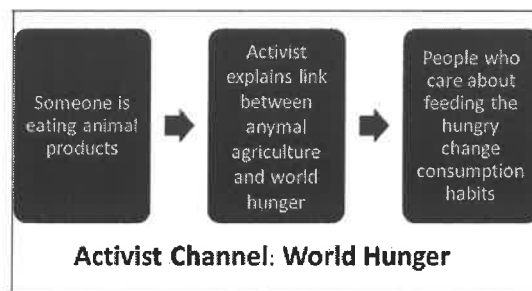
- Anymal suffering (homeless pets, anymals in labs, chickens in battery cages, and so on)
- Medical concerns (heart attacks, obesity, cancers, and so on)
- Oppressions (sexism, racism; poverty and world hunger; worker’s rights; and so on)
- Religious Ethics (love, compassion, mercy, simplicity, reincarnation, and so on)
- Environment/Earth (deforestation, freshwater depletion, climate change, and so on)



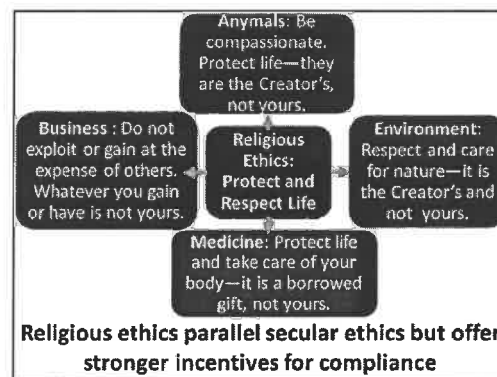
Medical concerns (AMORE: M for Medical)—especially diet and nutrition—are of increasing interest in light of rising costs of health care, and growing problems associated with diet, such as one in six children suffering from obesity—“[c]hildhood obesity is a serious concern in the United States,” (“Childhood Obesity”; “Childhood Overweight”). As it turns out, dairy, eggs, and meat are associated with the industrialized world’s leading killers, including heart disease, cancers, and strokes (“Leading,” n.d.). For those focused on human health in wealthy nations, and the soaring costs of medical care, dietary choices are a very important matter. Additionally, factory farms have proven ripe for zoonosis (diseases that can transfer from anymals to human beings, like bird and swine flu). A journal titled *Zoonoses and Public Health* has been around since 1954 (*Zoonosis*, 2016), and a quick Google search reveals that there is a noteworthy list of new books on the topic of intraspecies disease (*Amazon.com*, n.d.). Activists committed to public health or to fighting the growing cost of medical care constitute one of four key activist channels.



The third activist channel is composed of those working on behalf of oppressed peoples, whether against poverty or on behalf of worker’s rights (AMORE: “O” for oppression). Those working against hunger, once informed that 70% of U.S. grains and 60% of EU grains are fed to farmed anymals, are likely to agree that it is unethical “to feed grain to farmed animals . . . given that 854 million people worldwide suffer from hunger on a regular basis” (Kemmerer, 2014, p. 9). Those concerned about worker’s rights will likely be horrified to learn details of injury rates, neglected trainings, and a lack of insurance or medical leave offered to those working in slaughterhouses and on factory farms (Eisnitz, 2007, pp. 269-275).



Though religions do not constitute a social justice movement per se, the message of animal advocacy is also likely to resonate with people who are sincere in their religious convictions (Kemmerer, 2012, p. 282). When asked which religions were the most animal-friendly, animal activist and scholar Paul Waldau (2007) replied, “All the ones that are listening to their heart” (p. 31). In key ways, religious ethics parallel secular ethics, likely because religion “forms and shapes the morality of any society” (Rivas, 2014, p. 58). For example, both religious and secular ethics encourage service, compassion, respect for life, and integrity—core elements of animal liberation (Rivas, 2014, p. 35 and 37; Kemmerer, 2012, p. 279).



In comparison with secular ethics, religious ethics tend to carry more weight. For example, some religions (including Christianity and Islam) teach that ethics shape the difference between salvation and damnation. Muhammad is reported to have said, “If anyone wrongfully kills [even] a sparrow, . . . he will face God’s interrogation” (Haq, 2003, p. 149). Religious traditions (such as Hinduism and Buddhism) rooted in karma teach that moral indifference is likely to lead to suffering and misery because any pain caused to other beings “will have to be suffered by that human being later, either in this life or in a later rebirth” (Jacobsen, 1994, p. 289). Indian traditions also teach that adherents might gain favorable rebirth by practicing *ahimsa*, by doing what “is good for all creatures” (O’Flaherty, 1988, p. 124).

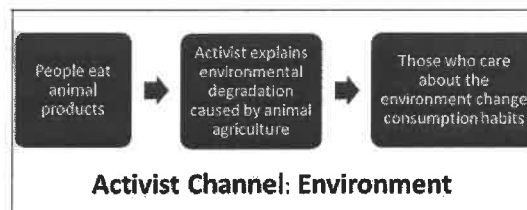
Because the stakes are so high when dealing with religious ethics, approaching the faithful can be extremely effective for inspiring change. In turn, working at the intersection of religious commitment and animal liberation requires a bit of specialized knowledge—activists need be versed in basic religious moral teachings. (See Kemmerer, *Animals and World Religions*, Oxford UP, 2012.) With this information in hand, an activist’s task is simple: Explain that the consumption of animal products, for instance, is a luxury among privileged peoples such as those in the European Union and the United States, and that such a diet perpetuates gross suffering and massive premature death and causes considerable environmental degradation, while preventing basic sustenance from reaching the mouths of the poor. Those who are sincere in a faith that is

rooted in compassion, sharing, simplicity, and/or humility—ethics that are foundational in every major religion—are compelled by such new information, at a minimum, to ponder what they put in their mouths. Additionally, they are likely to discuss this new information with others who share their faith, perhaps inspiring others to rethink consumption habits in order to avoid wasting grains by cycling them through farmed animals.



Those concerned about forests, waterways, and wildlife—and oftentimes human suffering caused by environmental degradation—provide the final activist channel (AMORE: E for Environment).

There is nothing so damaging to Earth as our habit of eating animals, and as a matter of consistency—as a matter of personal integrity—environmentalists ought to be vegan (See Kemmerer, *Eating Earth*, Oxford UP, 2014 and Oppenlander, *Comfortably Unaware*, Langdon Street, 2011). When environmentalists of integrity come to understand the link between animal agriculture and climate change or between animal agriculture and freshwater reduction, for example, they have every reason to unite against the meat, dairy, and egg industries



Social justice advocates fighting causes that intersect with anymal liberation, easily remembered with the acronym AMORE, can become worthy allies because they are already activists who care about bringing change. Sometimes, when they come to understand how other social justice issues overlap with animal liberation, they will add anymal advocacy to their social justice work, at least in some measure. I have bumped into a number of very strong and worthy anymal advocates who started out in other social justice movements.



Activist channels provide more likely ground for change because they provide a confluence that unites the concerns of anymal advocacy and the concerns of other social justice activists. Knowing this, anymal activists can choose to work at these junctures, focusing on overlapping concerns such as environmental human health, world hunger, worker's rights, and environmental degradation (AMORE). Activists from other social justice causes who are not yet vegan, for example, perhaps an environmentalist or someone working to combat world hunger—if they are sincere in their concerns and *if* they are open to new information—can become powerful allies both because they are already activists and because they are already committed to a cause that is worsened by anymal agriculture.

Stacked Exploitations and Linked Oppressions

Writing about the lives of Black (holding with Crenshaw's term) women in 1989, African American legal theorist and distinguished Professor of Law at UCLA, Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989), put the term "intersectionality" on the map by providing a graphic example of what this term describes. Intersectionality was coined to describe the plight of individuals who hold more than one attribute against which others tend to be prejudiced, in the case of Crenshaw's research, being Black and female. Crenshaw (1989) noted that the legal system treated these attributes as if they were separate and distinct, but in fact they exist together in the lives of individuals, compounding prejudice and difficulties likely to be associated with prejudice. Crenshaw (1989) offered this example: U.S. anti-discrimination laws protect *either* minority races *or* women, *but not women of minority races*. Consequently, if a company fired all African-American female employees, and those employees filed a discrimination lawsuit, they could find no justice through U.S. anti-discrimination laws *so long as Black men or Caucasian women were still employed* (Crenshaw, 1989). In the words of Crenshaw (1991), "the intersection of racism and sexism factors into Black women's lives in ways that cannot be captured wholly by looking at the race or gender dimensions of those experiences separately" (p. 1244).

Women of color simultaneously experience prejudice against women and prejudice against people of color. Crenshaw's work (1989) graphically exposed the intersectional nature of racism and sexism—these two factors (being black and female) compound the miseries that prejudice brings on the lives of Black women. It is as if a woman of color were standing in the middle of a traffic intersection where she can be hit simultaneously by the misogyny-truck and the racism-truck. And if she has other unjustly denigrated attributes, she can be hit from yet other angles: If she is a lesbian, she can be hit by the heterosexism-truck, if she is older, the ageism-truck, and if disable, the ableism-truck. Such an individual is, indeed, standing in the middle of a congested and high-risk intersection, where prejudice and oppression are likely to encroach from all sides.

This, then, is the context of intersectionality as coined and developed by African American scholars and activists. At some point, animal activists (such as myself) started to apply the term intersectionality to speciesism in a variety of novel ways, often with little or no understanding of the term's original meaning and purpose. Most commonly, this term is coopted to describe sexism expressed across species and speciesism expressed across sex. For example, both farmed animals and women are denigrated and sexually exploited, as evidenced by images of cow-women and woman-cows.



Other times this term is used to describe academic affiliations in reference to points at which different fields of study intersect with anymal studies, such as the crossroads of ethics and biology: Ethicists explain why sentience is always morally important while biologists explain how we know that anymals are sentient. Still other anymal activists apply “intersectionality” in a way that seems to better reflect this term’s original use, exploring compound oppressions in anymals. For example, I live with a pit bull mix, Woggie (aka Rose), who is both black and female, who had much trouble finding a home. Shelters tend to struggle to home dogs who are black indicating that adopters in our culture tend to have a measure of prejudice against black “pets,” termed “black dog syndrome” (Amanda, n.d.). Additionally, in the days when one could adopt an unneutered cat or dog, females were harder to home because they menstruate, because of the additional cost of spaying, and because of the fear of unwanted offspring. The unscrupulous adopter might well conclude that, by adopting a male dog or cat, they could avoid the cost of neutering without dealing with the complications of menstruation or pregnancy.

Did Woggie, suffer the effects of intersectionality as described in Crenshaw’s work? No. Comparing prejudice against Black *people* with prejudice against black *fur* is an equivocation of the term “black”—Black in reference to African American heritage entails much more than surface color. Moreover, racism is far more insidious and complicated than a preference for a particular fur color when adopting a dog or cat. Similarly, a human preference for male dogs as pets is nothing like intraspecies sexism and misogyny in human beings. Such misuse of “intersectionality”—largely by privileged scholars and activists—has no doubt been hurtful to at least some people who have personally experienced the ravages of sexism and racism overlapping in their experience of prejudice, and has no doubt been a frustration for those who understand the meaning and original application of intersectionality. Furthermore, in a dualistic, hierarchical, racist, sexist, speciesist society, it is ill-advised to compare the oppression of a marginalized person or persons with the oppression of yet more marginalized anymals. This is nowhere more true than when privileged people speak to people from marginalized communities about speciesism. In such cases “the otherness of nonhuman animals” (Scholtmeijer, 1995, p. 234) may be perceived as likely to pull marginalized people further “down into a condition of defeat” (ibid.) alongside anymals. Marginalized, oppressed people in speciesist societies tend to be offended when compared with pigs, chickens, or cows for good reason. Indeed, animalizing women and people of color is not

uncommon (Adams, pp. 45-46). Whether or not anymal activists are happy about this reaction, it is a reality, and offending marginalized peoples is not likely to improve the situation for any of those who are marginalized—including anymals.

This leads to a further point as regards word use and sensitivity to marginalized, oppressed peoples. Not only should privileged anymal activists stop misappropriating the term intersectionality, we ought to stop using analogies such as those of slavery and rape when describing anymal abuse. Bringing up the topic of slavery in a room dominated by Caucasians calls attention to visible racial difference, and is likely to alienate an already marginalized minority in the anymal liberation community. This is true no matter how nuanced that conversation might be, at least in part because “slavery” references just one *historic* manifestation of a many-faceted, painful, *ongoing* problem—systemic racism. Referencing racism as if it were only situated in our (embarrassing and ugly) past, belies the truth, while such references of race and oppression actually reinforce difference, highlight privilege, and further marginalize those who are already marginalized. Such analogies are micro-aggressions—and “micro” as used in this term by no means implies small or insignificant.

As a Caucasian, I perhaps best understand how such references might feel via my own reaction to the analogy of rape when used by men. Men have no reality with rape as experienced by women—not that men are never raped, only that their experience of rape, because of male privilege and power, cannot be that of women, who are systematically disempowered, objectified, sexualized, and exploited. For those identified as women, rape almost always entails physical force from an empowered male and is accompanied by the dreaded possibility of pregnancy. Additionally, fear of rape does not generally shape where men go, or when, or whom they trust, how they feel about their bodies, or whether or not they are able to enjoy sex. And “rape” is much more likely to be a trigger for women than for men. Referencing rape reminds women of their jeopardized safety in relation to that of men. It reminds women of their physical wounds in a misogynist culture, of every negative sexual encounter they ever suffered, and of male privilege. (Such a reaction may also be suffered by those who are transgender, with the additional weight of transphobia.) Through this lens I can better understand how the analogy of slavery, when used by Caucasians, is likely to offend people of color, and why such references are micro-aggressions—though by no means small. For these reasons, comparing one form of oppression to another (through the use of analogies such as slavery and rape) is likely to alienate the very people anymal activists and scholars hope to work with in our struggle for anymal liberation.

While it may be easy for anymal activists to draw analogies between anymal exploitation and other forms of oppression, such comparisons drawn by the privileged are just one more manifestation of racism and/or sexism. As anymal activists, our intent is presumably to reduce suffering in the world and work with others to achieve total liberation for all living beings. Choosing analogies that remind “others” of their disempowered status, or of the many pains they have suffered as targets of prejudice, works against both goals. Instead, such analogies are likely to cause yet more suffering, and are therefore morally objectionable. On all counts, privileged anymal liberationists

ought to avoid such comparisons, and any others that are likely to offend and alienate marginalized and/or disempowered peoples. Whether or not these comparisons seem apt or effective, comparing a black dog with a Black woman, forced pregnancy with rape, and anymal agriculture with slavery is highly likely to offend. For a privileged person to risk offending those who are already disenfranchised by using what they figure to be a powerful analogy in the hope of reducing suffering and bringing positive change is absolutely not an acceptable, reasonable, or enlightened approach. Further, if anymal advocates genuinely believe that oppressions are interconnected, then activists ought to be willing to alter language as a matter of sensitivity to oppressed and marginalized human beings—especially given that anymal activists would like others to alter much more pervasive and foundational behaviors on behalf of anymals, such as diet. Those who stand within disempowered communities referenced by such analogies are, of course, free to decide whether or not they would like to use these analogies, but those outside of these communities must not. As one woman speaking to other women, with regard to the use of rape, I advise against the use of this analogy/term given the likelihood of further harming those who are already painfully wounded. Especially given that, it is easy to find other ways of describing such exploitation of anymals, for example by replacing “rape” with forced impregnation, which is actually a more accurate description. Moreover, analogies are not necessary to outreach because the extensive sufferings of anymals stand quite well on their own.

Similarly, if people from marginalized or oppressed communities object to the (mis)use of “intersectionality” by privileged anymal activists, then the privileged ought to choose another word. Indeed, a lively discussion has ensued as to whether or not anymal activists ought to use the term “intersectionality” (Martindill, 2015). Continuing to use a term that was coined by Black scholars (to describe oppressions that Black women face) to reference anymal suffering and exploitation *even after people inside communities of color have clearly stated their objections to such use*, is not acceptable.

At the end of the day, there is much that privileged people need to understand about prejudice and privilege—not just to be good activists, but to be good citizens. There is—and should be—a steep learning curve for comparatively privileged anymal activists who endeavor to work against multiple forms of oppression. There certainly has been for me. I speak from experience when I note that, even before we fully understand why—even if we never understand why—we ought to honor and respect the voices of those within prejudice-targeted communities. Furthermore, oppressed populations are not responsible to explain privilege to privileged activists, or to explain why they find certain comparisons or terminology offensive. Maybe we will come to understand why, but even if we do not, privileged activists with integrity cannot willfully choose to use offensive, hurtful analogies or terms in the name of justice and liberation.

Patricia Hill Collins (2002) discussed intersectionality as a “micro-level process” describing how individuals and groups occupy “a social position *within* interlocking structures of oppression” (p. 82, *italics added*). She introduced the term “interlocking systems of oppression” (Collins *et al*, 2002, p. 82) to explain overarching mechanisms that undergird oppression, social structures that

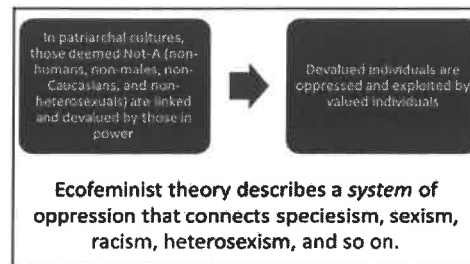
engender, for example, racism *and* classism *and* heterosexism. Intersectionality (on a micro-level) and “interlocking structures of oppression” (Collins *et al*, 2002, p. 82) (on a macro-level), shape and drive oppression.

Patricia Hill Collins’ (2002) conception of “interlocking structures of oppression” shares key elements with ecofeminists, who note that “major systems of oppression are interlocking” (Combahee, 1977, p. 38). Ecofeminism offers a variety of paradigms that describe how diverse prejudices and oppressions are interconnected, such as false value dualisms and hierarchy. Carol Adams labels these fabricated dualistic categories “A” and “Not A” (Adams, 2003, p. 50).

False Value Dualisms	A	Not A
	Male	Not Male
	Reason	Without Reason
	Able	Not Able
	Spirit	Not Spirit
	Heterosexual	Not Heterosexual
	Controlled	Not Controlled
	Caucasian	Not Caucasian
	Light	Not Light
	Civilized	Not Civilized
	Human	Not Human
	Mind	Not Mind

The “A” category contains the preferred model, the prototype. Those in the “Not A” category are denigrated in relation to the A category—man over woman, human over chicken, Caucasian over those of Latin American viewed as instrumental—means to the ends of those in the A category. In order to uphold this decent, and hetero over queer. Those in the Not A category are also associated with one another and power-over structure (and the short-term advantages of exploiting others) those in the A category “maintain a strong distinction and maximize distance” (Plumwood, 1991, p. 23) between A and Not-A groupings and individuals.

False value dualisms lead to oppression. “Ecofeminists see the oppression of women, people of color, children, lesbians and gays and the destruction of nature as linked and mutually reinforcing because of a system of domination that is legitimized and perpetuated by various institutions such as the state, the military, religion, the patriarchal family, and industrial capitalism” (Heller, 1995, p. 351).



Employing Ecofeminist philosophy, it is easy to see speciesism, racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, and so on, stemming from the same underlying *system* of oppression that stems from and shapes our larger worldview, which is rooted in false value dualisms and hierarchy. These “isms” are therefore “linked oppressions.” Linked oppressions are a social phenomenon that stems from and reinforces a particular worldview, such as that of false value dualisms.

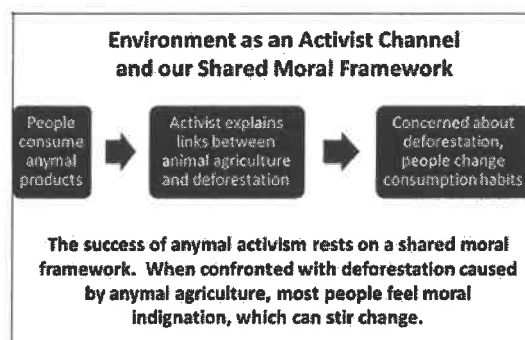
Note that many on the Not A side are burdened with more than one “Not A” attribute. If we return to the case of Woggie, we can better understand why she lingered at the shelter: She suffers from several burdens, aversions, discriminations—whatever we might like to call a tendency toward negativity with regard to a particular attribute. Woggie is not white (as distinct from but I some ways connected with Caucasian and prejudice against blackness), not male, not human, and viewed as not rational or of God/spirit (because she is not human) and not civilized/tame (because she is a pit-bull). Five Not A attributes and their accompanying prejudices were stacked against her as she looked hopefully out from her cage, and these stacked discriminations compounded to make her life more difficult and her adoption less likely. For example, dogs like Woggie have been,

- as females, exploited for reproductive biology, to produce fighting dogs;
- as pit-bulls, banned from certain “civilized” areas;
- as anymals, owned as property and granted no rights of their own;
- and as anymals, euthanized because they were viewed as having no significance or value of their own.

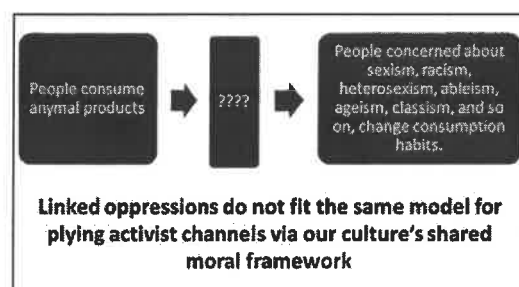
Stacked prejudice and stacked exploitations are experienced by individuals.

Consider a second and more generic example—a random Holstein cow (a breed most often exploited for dairy in the United States). She suffers from at least three stacked discriminations: not human, not male, and not rational, and as with Woggie, based on these stacked aversions or prejudices, Holsteins suffer from stacked exploitation: As an anymal she is owned as property and is assumed to have no right to life or liberty; viewed as an irrational anymal, she is granted no innate value as an individual and so is killed for her flesh; and as a female she is exploited for her reproductive biology (veal calves and cow’s milk). The plight of Woggie and that of Holstein cows demonstrate how stacked discriminations result in stacked exploitations.

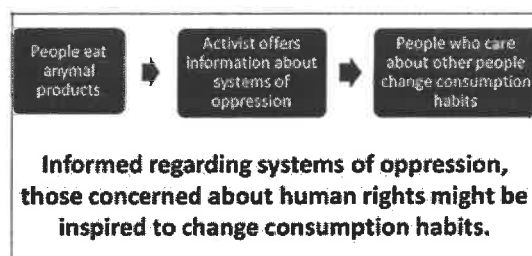
To relate this back to activist channels and ethics, recall the importance of our shared moral framework for social justice advocacy.



When we apply this to linked oppressions, note that this model does not appear to work.



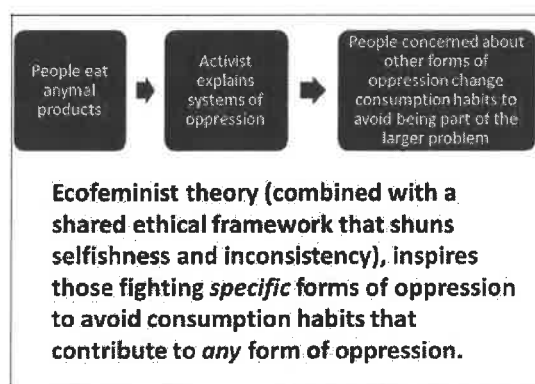
The model does not appear to work in such instances because of what is commonly referred to as “the invisibility of privilege” (Salamon, 2006; Yancy, 2004; Sullivan, Shannon, & Tuana, 2007; Harper, 2010). Luckily, theories that expose systems of oppression, such as Collins’ explanation of “interlocking structures of oppression” and ecofeminism’s false value dualisms provide the necessary connection.



Understanding systems of oppression leads to the conclusion that liberation movements *are all inextricably bound together*—if oppressions are linked then liberation is linked. This means that *effective social justice advocates must avoid feeding into one form of oppression while fighting another*. Activists hoping to liberate pigs and pullets ought to avoid contributing to sexism and racism, ageism and classism, ableism and heterosexism. And those working against environmental racism or poverty ought to avoid oppressing anymals—which requires that sincere environmentalists go vegan. In light of interlocking oppressions, social justice activists must take

a stand on behalf of *all* who are oppressed if they hope to liberate *any* who are oppressed (Kemmerer, 2011, pp. 7-16).

As noted, anymal activists engaging at the confluence of activist channels need only understand how anymal exploitation overlaps with a particular social justice concern, such as human health or environmental degradation, for example, in order to discuss anymal exploitation with omnivores. In contrast, those engaging with religious communities must additionally have a fair understanding of the basic religious ethics of those they hope to influence: Buddhist ahimsa to engage with Buddhists, service and humility to engage with Christians, and so on. Yet more is required of those engaging with “linked oppressions” (social justice activists fighting racism, sexism, ageism, ableism, heterosexism, classism, and so on). Such activists must understand systems of oppression—without this additional knowledge there is tremendous risk of inadvertently reinforcing privilege and oppression (systems of oppression).



Those engaging with linked oppressions must also be sincere in their concern for other oppressed groups and not only their concern for anymals. Early anymal activists—myself included—tended to be privileged and narrow, with a limited understanding of other social justice concerns. There were, of course, a few bright lights in the movement (such as Marti Kheel, Greta Gaard, & Carol Adams), who demonstrated an awareness of linked oppressions early on. Sadly, such informed individuals were few and far between, and remain a small minority in the animal liberation movement to this day.

Ecofeminist analysis, especially when combined with a commitment to moral consistency, inspires a commitment to help any and all oppressed groups. That said, expecting activists to thoroughly understand important contemporary nuances and in-depth history of all oppressed groups is unreasonable—though it would certainly be ideal. Linked oppressions and moral consistency *do* require that *all* social justice activists *aspire to prevent all forms of oppression*. This means, for example, that feminists who are in a position to do so ought to go vegan to align with the cause of anymal liberation. Anymal activists who are in a position to do so ought to defend the rights of trans individuals and buy minimally packaged, organic food (using cloth bags) in order to preserve and protect the environment. Environmentalists ought to go vegan and hire leaders who are women

and people of color. *All* advocacy organizations ought to have leaders who stand within marginalized communities—such as those identifying as lesbian, Native American, female, trans, differently abled, and so on. Those identifying among the oppressed ought to feel free to claim spaces where they can meet without oppressors, and those in the movement who are overtly insensitively to others and/ or who exploit and harm women (most often it is women within the movement, and is therefore very noticeable) ought to be overtly shunned and rejected—at a minimum, they ought to be denied access to positions of power, including leadership of any kind and speaking engagements. In light of linked oppressions, effective advocacy requires leadership by the marginalized. This diversity of backgrounds, knowledge, traditions, customs, beliefs, and ideas ought to shape and reshape activist strategies, methods, and goals. The voices of the marginalized and the oppressed ought to ring from megaphones and podiums, while those who are comparatively privileged listen and learn. If we intend to stand against linked oppressions, the privileged must stand down.

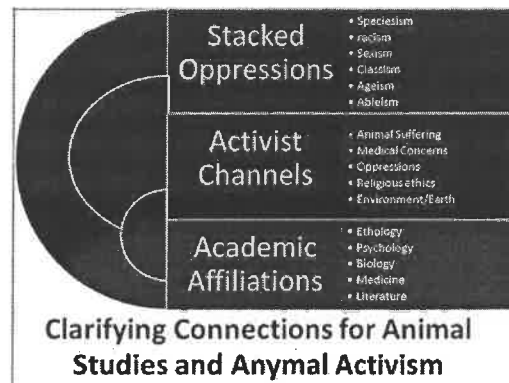
It is now clear that fighting for one's pet cause (pun intended) while fostering other forms of exploitation is not only narrow and selfish, but ultimately ineffective. In light of linked oppressions, privileged activists must be sincerely interested in dismantling larger systems of oppression and in helping to bring equality to all oppressed groups, both as a matter of strategy (one cannot prevent speciesism while fostering sexism or racism, for example), and as a matter of personal integrity (living up to our own understanding of linked oppressions). I again remind that tapping into the sufferings of humanity with the sole intent of bringing change for animals (without compassion for those approached—without intent to also relieve *their* suffering)—or worse yet for self aggrandizement, including access to sexual opportunities—is selfish, insensitive, myopic (in other words, immoral) and cannot ultimately result in the total liberation that is necessary if we are to free anymals from the cruelties of humanity.

Cross-fertilization

Of course the world of academics and activists is intertwined. For example, where would anymal activism be today without moral foundations developed by Peter Singer and Tom Regan? How would we understand interlocking oppressions without the work of Collins and ecofeminists? Scholars provide activists with information that is vital to the cause of liberation in key areas such as ethics, biology, and sociology. In addition, scholars are sometimes activists. On learning about anymal exploitation or linked oppressions, academics sometimes go vegan, engage in direct action, and/or found educational nonprofit organizations on behalf of anymals.

Activist channels (AMORE) rest on theories and subject-specific information		
	Helpful theories	Subject-specific examples
Anymal Suffering	Ethical theories (utilitarianism, rights theory)	On what basis might only humans hold a right to life?
Medical Concerns	Medical Ethics ("Do no harm")	Flesh, dairy, and eggs are linked with heart disease and cancers.
Oppressions	Ecofeminism (systems of oppression)	Animal abuse is linked to domestic violence.
Religious Ethics	Religious Ethics (ahimsa, service, compassion)	Elephants in zoos suffer from chronic foot problems.
Environment	Ecofeminism and/or Environmental Ethics	Hunting, linked with constructs of manhood, damages ecosystems.

In return, anymal activists provide scholars with essential information, such as undercover footage, which informs dialogue in ethics, literature, and law. Such graphic visuals sometimes motivate scholars to activism—or they can motivate activists to become scholars, as I did many years ago. Both activists and scholars validate and inspire one other—on a daily basis, I am inspired and motivated by the works of scholars and activists alike.



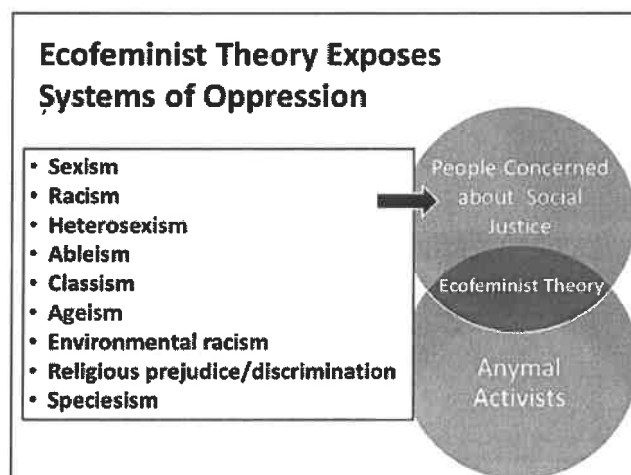
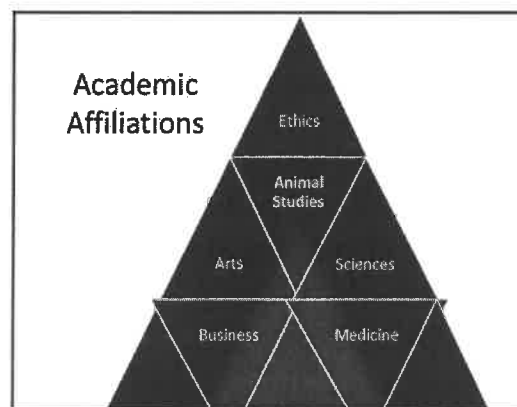
Conclusion

Anymal studies has grown tremendously in recent years, overlapping with other fields of study to create a host of academic affiliations, and is now recognized as overlapping with other prejudices to create stacked exploitations in the lives of individual. The denigration and exploitation of anymals is also linked to other forms of oppression, such as racism, transphobia, sexism, classism, and ableism, as evidenced by Ecofeminism. Choosing terms that distinguish clearly between these various areas of growth and interconnected phenomenon is increasingly important if anymal activists and animal studies scholars are to communicate effectively and respectfully.

Understanding false value dualisms helps to visually demonstrate why anymals, alongside disempowered human beings, suffer from stacked denigrations that lead to stacked exploitations. This has led at least some dedicated anymal activists to learn more about privilege and prejudice, and to change behaviors accordingly. Grasping linked oppressions (and just being a decent person in general) requires privileged anymal activists to be more informed (and concerned) about an

array of social justice issues, which in turn requires that anymal activists be more thoughtful and sensitive when choosing words and using analogies.

In light of stacked prejudice and exploitation and linked oppressions, those who are privilege in relation to others in the movement need to quit taking up more than their fair share of space and power. Perhaps most obviously, men in the movement need to quit objectifying and exploiting women, as most commonly evidenced by language choice and through their serial sexual relations—especially with women who are significantly younger. In a world where white male domination replicates existing structures of power and reaffirms systems of oppression, mimicking and reaffirming sexism, racism, and other “isms” that are common in the larger culture destroys the hope that anymal activists must necessarily hold for reshaping our relationship with anymals, the earth, and one another.



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